



# E-NEWS

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**January 5th, 2024**

## **From The Executive Director**

Hello, and Happy New Year! Hard to imagine that 2024 is upon us already. MCDHH wishes you the best! We have several things going on of which I would like to make you aware. One being that there will be a commission meeting on January 18<sup>th</sup> at the public library in Jefferson City. Details are listed below. We are looking into posting more meeting information on our website for the public to access. If you are interested in that kind of information, we will let you know when it is posted.

Right before the holiday season, we began our plans to re-establish an SSP Taskforce meeting. More information will come on the taskforce so you can participate and offer feedback as a consumer or SSP. We believe in this program and want to see it be as successful and accessible as we can.

This week, I attended the annual Governor's Prayer Breakfast. I saw several faces of the people who worked with us during our LEAD-K campaign. I also had the pleasure of meeting the emcee, MU Athletic Director, Desiree Reed-Francois who introduced herself, signing her name and learning some common phrases; very open and friendly. I also had the pleasure of meeting a guest who just happened to be the mother of a deaf person who grew up in the Cape Girardeau area. We talked about her time as a mother of a deaf child and I explained the passage of LEAD-K and how we hope to assist in parents' quest for resources and information. Her son is a father of four and living in Arkansas. The Deaf Community, spread far and wide, but always feels like a close-knit group.



Governor Mike Parson's theme was "No Turning Back" and while he remarked on the opportunity to "re-live" parts of his life while writing his book, he mentioned that there are moments of time that you cannot turn back from; they will always be a part of who you are from there on. Be mindful in your actions and decisions and you should take those experiences with you as you keep moving forward. This will be Parson's final Prayer Breakfast as our Governor but it was a great message to start out our new year.

**NEXT COMMISSION MEETING**

**JANUARY 18<sup>TH</sup>, 2024**

**10AM-2PM**

**MISSOURI RIVER REGIONAL LIBRARY**

**THOMAS JEFFERSON ROOM**

**214 ADAMS ST**

**JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101**

**MCDHH COMMISSION MEETING**

***MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE FOLLOWING DATES:***

**APRIL 4<sup>TH</sup> OR 11<sup>TH</sup> KCMO 10-2 PM**

**JULY 18<sup>TH</sup> JCMO 10-2PM**

**OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup> JCMO 10-2PM**



## Amusing Trivia

In the exciting world of "The Squid," a South Korean Netflix that took the streaming universe by storm in September 2021, viewers were plunged into a high-stakes game where financial desperation meets the chance to win a jaw-dropping \$45.6 billion prize. What seemed like innocent children's games quickly transformed into the ultimate survival challenge.

Taking the excitement to new heights, Netflix teamed up with independent TV production Studio Lambert and the Garden to birth a reality TV spin-off – "Squid Game: The Challenge." With \$4.56 million up for grabs, this show turned the competition up a notch, featuring 456 players. But one player stood out as a beacon of representation and resilience.

Meet Jackie Gonzalez, a 29-year-old from San Antonio, who played the role of "Player 393" in Reality TV. Beyond the gripping narratives of survival, Jackie had a unique motivation – to be a voice for the deaf and hard-of-hearing

Latino community. Her decision to join the competition was

fueled by a personal mission, having never encountered a deaf person until the age of 14. Almost 40% of the deaf and hard-of-hearing Latino community will drop out of high school because of a lack of access and slipping through the cracks.

Jackie, along with her sister, co-owns the trendy online retail shop "Jack & Bec." Their journey doesn't stop there; with a TikTok page boasting over 286,000 followers, the dynamic duo uses their platform to share their experiences and connect with a growing audience. Jackie's inspiring journey within the challenging confines of "The Squid" not only added a layer of diversity to the game but also brought attention to the struggles faced by the deaf and hard-of-hearing Latino community.

As the world eagerly watches the twists and turns of "Squid Game: The Challenge," Jackie Gonzalez emerges as a symbol of strength and representation, proving that reality TV can be both gripping and socially impactful.



*"Not seeing yourself represented is a huge deal in the deaf community. For me, it was really important to be on the show. If I had met a successful deaf or hard-of-hearing Latina as a high school student, I think a lot of things might be different."*

# MCDHH's Upcoming Occasions

## Defying Gravity:

Dive into the Details of the 2024 KC Interpreters Conference—

Register Now for Exclusive Access!

April 4-6, 2024

- **Registration:**
  - <https://mcdhh.mo.gov/registration/>
- **Forms:**
  - <https://mcdhh.mo.gov/forms-2/>
- **Schedule:**
  - <https://mcdhh.mo.gov/schedule/>
- **Payment:**
  - <https://mcdhh.mo.gov/2024payment/>
- **Presenters' Bios:**
  - <https://mcdhh.mo.gov/presenters-bio/>
- **Workshops Descriptions:**
  - <https://mcdhh.mo.gov/workshop-descriptions/>



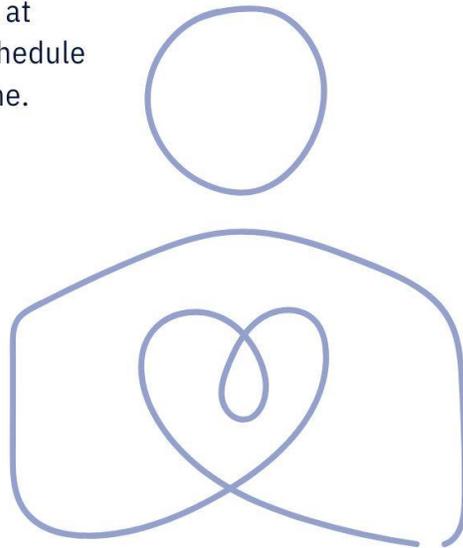
# MISSOURI COMMISSION FOR THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING

## DO YOU NEED ADVOCACY?

We have a passion for providing advocacy for Deaf and Hard of hearing Missourians. If you need any assistance, please contact our Deaf Community Advocate, Sonya Smith at (573) 298-6778 or email at [sonya.smith@mcdhh.mo.gov](mailto:sonya.smith@mcdhh.mo.gov) to schedule appointment. Walk-ins are welcome.

### OUR SERVICES:

- SSA & SSDI
- Request ASL interpreter
- Communication assistant
- and more....



# Mainstream News

## Metro-Call-A-Ride

Metro Call-A-Ride paratransit service is for passengers who rely on transit but have disabilities that prevent them from using MetroLink and/or MetroBus network. The service is available for anyone with disabilities, they have to make reservations and expect to share the ride with other passengers in modern, wheelchair-accessible vehicles.

The Transportation Committee Chair is seeking new people to get involved with the committee, especially because they need more people representing from Kansas City, Columbia, Jefferson City, Lincoln County, Jefferson County, and Southeast Missouri.

The expectations from being part of a committee is to commit to all meetings, and to attend city/county council meetings, even transit meetings in your areas.

They will be more than happy to give you guidance and suggestions, and they have a ton of resources to help you- they truly need local people because they truly know their areas and can make a difference.



We typically have our meetings on the fourth Saturday of the month via Zoom from 1-3 p.m. Remember this is not just my committee, it is your committee and if you want things to change in your area you need to be a part of the solution. Please email me at [robynwallen@gmail.com](mailto:robynwallen@gmail.com) with, "Transportation Committee" in the subject line. Right now I am not looking for any more members in the St. Louis area. Please respond by January 15th 2024

## Mental Health Services for the Deaf

**There are mental services available for the D/HOH community in both St. Louis and Kansas City!**

As we move into the winter season with shorter days, longer nights, and many holidays, it is important to talk about Seasonal Depression. Many people go through times when they feel unusually sad or just different, for some, these feelings happen when the seasons change and have the "winter blues" when the daylight gets shorter in the fall/winter and start to feel better after daylight savings in the spring when the sun is out for longer.

Sometimes these mood changes can be more serious and can affect how a person feels, thinks, and even behaves. If you have noticed significant changes in your mood, thoughts, or behaviors during the fall/winter time, you may be struggling with Seasonal Affect Disorder or Seasonal Depression. Symptoms can include, among other things: Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood, feeling hopeless, guilt, or unusually irritable. Oversleeping, over eating, and avoiding social situations can all be signs as well.

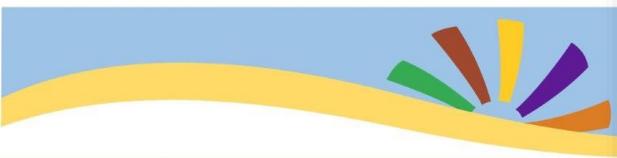
The holidays can also bring about struggles with loneliness, additional stress and anxiety, and the 'Holiday Blues". The good news is, treatment is available. Treatments for the "holiday blues" and for season depression can include talk therapy and medication services.

For anyone needing assistance on the East side of the state of Missouri, BJC Behavioral Health can help with therapy, medication, case management support. Please contact Laura Shapiro by cell phone: 314-210-4301 or email: [laura.shapiro@bjc.org](mailto:laura.shapiro@bjc.org)

Kansas City also offers mental health services for anyone in the Western half of the state of Missouri. Please contact Elijah Buchholz by cell phone: 913-709-5540 or email: [ebuchholz@rediscovermh.org](mailto:ebuchholz@rediscovermh.org)

Both programs offer services and therapy by sign fluent therapist and staff who can directly provide mental health support to those in need!

# General Upcoming Affairs



**We work with the hearing impaired  
Do you have Medicare Part A and B?**

Would you like these benefits?

- \*Comprehensive Dental/Dentures
- \*Eyeglasses/Hearing aids
- \*Healthy Foods

It only takes a couple of minutes to see if you may qualify for these and other benefits that you may not be receiving now.

- Remember: No cost to you to see if you qualify!

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Call or Text  
**573.253.9502**



Call Frank or Kim Hanna 573.253.9502  
\*Licensed Independent Medicare Insurance Brokers\*

We do not offer every plan available in your area. Any information that we provide is limited to those plans we do offer in your area. Please contact Medicare.gov or 1-800-medicare for information regarding all your options.



TWO PART HYBRID  
**SSP TRAINING**

**PART 1: ONLINE**  
Monday, January 22  
6pm - 8pm  
via Zoom

**PART 2: IN PERSON**  
Saturday, January 27  
9am - 5pm  
Lincoln University  
820 Chestnut St.  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

**WHAT IS AN SSP?**  
Support Service Providers (SSPs) are specially trained guides who work with DeafBlind individuals to ensure they have all the facts they need to make informed decisions by relaying environmental info to DeafBlind individuals in their preferred language and communication mode. SSPs simply give access to all the visual and aural details available.

**QUALIFICATIONS**

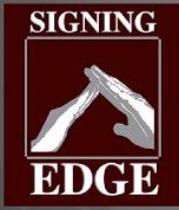
- Over 18 years of age
- Basic knowledge of DeafBlind culture
- Demonstrate skills to communicate comfortably/effectively w/ DeafBlind folks
- Access to internet, personal email address, working knowledge of Microsoft Word
- Valid driver's license and proof of auto insurance or state-issued identification
- Pass MO SSP Background Screening Policy
- Paid \$20/hr with travel time. Mileage paid at IRS rate if transporting DeafBlind consumers



[REGISTER HERE](#)

Questions?  
(636) 542-8126  
brett.wilhelm@vancro.com

Sponsored by:  
**Missouri Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

**CERTIFIED DEAF MENTOR TRAINING**

April 6, 2024  
8 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Location: TBA  
Kansas City, Missouri

[CONTACT US](#)

[636-692-4630](tel:636-692-4630) [www.signingedge.com](http://www.signingedge.com)

# List of Links Resources

## Event Dates:

### Certified Deaf Mentor Training

#### Signing Edge

April 6, 2024

8 AM-3PM

*Location: TBA KCMO*

*P: 636-692-4630*

[www.signingedge.com](http://www.signingedge.com)

### Two Part Hybrid SSP Training

#### **Part 1: Online**

Monday, January 22 6-8pm

*Zoom*

#### **Part 2: In person**

Saturday, January 27 9am-5pm

*Lincoln University*

*820 Chestnut St.*

*JCMO 65101*

<https://airtable.com/app4xNbVbQkxbzpsC/shrSB2R1BjoTi2rQX>

## Resourcess

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It only takes a couple of minutes to see if you may qualify for these and other benefits that you may not receiving now

\*Remember no cost to you to see if you qualify!

Call Frank or Kim Hanna at 573.253.9502

\*License Independent Medicare Insurance Broke